

March 1, 2008

### **Obey SAYS ADMINISTRATION's PLAN TO CLEAR DISABILITY CLAIM BACKLOG IS TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Five years to clear the Social Security disability claims backlog is totally unacceptable, Seventh District Congressman Dave Obey (D-WI) said after a hearing that he conducted this week to review the Administration's budget request for the Social Security Administration.

After almost a decade of Congress shortchanging the Social Security Administration (SSA), the agency has lost employees, been forced to reduce services, and built up a backlog of over 680,000 disability claims waiting for adjudication. Last year, for the first time in over a decade, Congress provided, over the Administration's objection, \$150 million more to begin to clean up the backlog.

However, SSA Commissioner Michael Astrue testified before Obey's Committee on Thursday that under the Administration's plan it will take until 2013 to fully clear the disability claims backlog.

"That's just not acceptable," said Obey. "Families will lose their houses; they will lose their financial security; and people will die before they get the help they are entitled to."

"This is just another example of what diverting \$200 billion to the cost of the war every year is doing to our ability to deal with problems here at home," Obey concluded.

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